

## Dead and Wounded

Even as Waddell and Moore sought to prevent the deaths of the men imprisoned at the jail, skirmishes between blacks and whites continued into the night. The *Messenger* reported that at about 8:35 on the evening of the eleventh, blacks and whites exchanged gunfire along Belcher's Row in Brooklyn. About an hour later more shots were fired along Fourth Street near Harnett. Sporadic fighting raged through the day on the tenth and into the night, and the dead were left on the streets where they had died.<sup>54</sup> Whites forbade families from tending to their dead and wounded, leaving the dead on their backs in the streets with their eyes open as a warning to others. White doctors asked authorities to explain to all that blacks would be treated at the hospital, and, as a result, a number of black patients were brought into the hospital on the eleventh.<sup>55</sup> On the afternoon of the riot, African American coroner David Jacobs drove through town and moved some of the dead to D. C. Evans funeral home on Second Street near Princess to hold the inquest.<sup>56</sup>

It appears that the men retrieved by Jacobs were the ones who received an

inquest. Most likely the bodies were picked up for inquest and burial because they had family in the city with the means to provide for proper burial. Other less fortunate men were buried under the cover of darkness by family members who were unable to pay for burial and grave markers. Of the men who received the inquest, burial for John Townsend, Charles Lindsay, William Mouzon, John Gregory, Josh Halsey, and Dan Wright took place on the eleventh.<sup>57</sup>

Jacobs' investigation was farcical and delayed. He first attempted to hold an inquest at the funeral home on the eleventh at 10:00 in the morning. The morning's review was then delayed until 3:00 in the afternoon. The rescheduled hearing was again delayed until 9:00 on the twelfth and was moved to the courthouse. At the inquest on the twelfth, the coroner's jury consisted of four white men—Colonel John W. Atkinson, E. P. Bailey, J. B. Huggins, William M. Cumming—and two black men, Elijah Lane and J. W. Yarborough.<sup>58</sup> Official coroner's records do not survive,

<sup>54</sup> Hayden made the claim that five or six black men wearing their work coveralls were shot and killed after Mayo was wounded. Their "bodies were allowed to remain stretched on their backs with their eyes open as a warning to other blacks." The *Messenger* reported that although several bodies were moved by coroner David Jacobs to a funeral home, some still "lay last night where the men were shot down." Hayden, *WLI*, 89; *Wilmington Messenger*, November 11, 1898.

<sup>55</sup> The hospital, City-County Hospital, was later replaced by James Walker Hospital. City-County Hospital was located in the same general vicinity as James Walker, in the area bounded by Rankin, Gwynn, Woods, and Dickinson Streets.

<sup>56</sup> The *Dispatch* claimed that "not one of the negroes who were killed was a native of the State but were a delegation brought in from South Carolina prior to the election." This claim cannot be substantiated. *Evening Dispatch* (Wilmington), November 12, 1898; *Wilmington Messenger*, November 14, 1898.

<sup>57</sup> Only two grave markers in Pine Forest Cemetery bear death dates related to the riot. Josh Halsey's entry recorded that he was born around 1846, and died November 10, 1898 of a gunshot and was buried in the Halsey family plot, section C. Sam McFarland's record indicated that he was born in South Carolina around 1850, "died of a gunshot in his body" on November 12, 1898, and was buried in lot M or N, section 2. A review of the cemetery log also proves inconclusive since those two men are the only ones listed. Another person, Samuel Hall, age 12, died of gunshot wounds and was buried December 22, 1898. No information has been found to clarify if Hall received his fatal wound as a result of the riot or some other incident. Parts of the cemetery have disappeared over time and many burials may have gone unrecorded. Further, some private and church cemeteries have also disappeared. Pine Forest Cemetery Records, (microfilm), State Archives, North Carolina Office of Archives and History, Raleigh.

<sup>58</sup> *Wilmington Messenger*, November 11 - 13, 1898; *News and Courier* (Charleston) as quoted in the *Wilmington Messenger*, November 15, 1898; *Morning Star* (Wilmington), November 11-13, 1898.